

MANUFACTURING SYSTEM FOR AIRCRAFT STRUCTURES
AND OTHER LARGE STRUCTURES

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

5 A production system for manufacturing a workpiece comprises an index system including a plurality of index devices removably mounted on the workpiece at known longitudinally spaced locations therealong, and a longitudinally extending index member releasably engaged with at least two of the index devices such that a position and orientation of the index member are fixed relative to the workpiece by the index devices, the index member having position-indicating features distributed therealong. The 10 production system further comprises a machine module mounted for longitudinal movement along the index member and operable to perform an operation, the machine module being operable to detect the position-indicating features on the index member and thereby determine a position of the machine module relative to the workpiece.

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